

Remarks/Arguments:

This is a reply to the office action of January 10. All claims presently stand rejected over prior art and/or on formal grounds.

We have canceled claims 18 and 19 above, in response to the rejection under 35 USC §112. Voluntary editorial changes have been made in claims 16, 17, 20, 21 and 23.

An object of the present invention is "to provide an adhesive composition which has *improved wet peel strength*" (cf. para [0009] of the application as published, US 2006/0211808 A1; emphasis added) *on polar substrates* such as skin (cf. paragraph [0001] of US 2006/0211808 A1).

The rejection of claims 1 - 17 as being unpatentable over Wang (US 6,428,900 31) is traversed, for reasons set out below.

First, the examiner correctly states (page 4, top) that Wang discloses a water-sensitive hot melt adhesive composition. The adhesive according to Wang even *dissolves* in the presence of water (abstract, last sentence), inasmuch as it "can be induced to debond quickly upon exposure to water" (col. 3, lines 34-35). Moreover, Wang aims at strong bonds "on low surface energy substrates" (col. 3, line 32), i.e. on non-polar substrates in the manufacture of, e.g., disposable non-woven articles such as diapers.

Also, the examiner correctly notes (page 4, middle) that Wang does not disclose an adhesive composition containing an elastomeric block copolymer (not to mention a block copolymer with the specific diblock content as specified in pending claim 11).

However, the examiner's subsequent conclusions are respectfully traversed.

The examiner referred to col. 1, line 50 of Wang; this, however, is in fact a description of the prior art which has been found disadvantageous ("... they have had several shortcomings which have detracted from their usefulness"; col. 1, lines 57 - 58).

We submit that the citation of col. 1, line 50 of Wang was interpreted out of context by the examiner when construing these polymers as obvious modifications of the compositions according to Wang. Quite to the contrary, Wang explicitly teaches away from using these polymers.

Moreover, no diblock content of the prior art block copolymer is disclosed in Wang et al., and the examiner has not cited any other document dealing with the diblock content of the respective polymers. In contradistinction, the diblock content is a mandatory feature of the pending claims, and the beneficial effect (especially with respect to the wet peel strength) of the high diblock content in combination with sulphonated co-polyesters is demonstrated in the application in detail; we refer in particular to Table 1 of the present application and to pages [0026]-[0033] of the present application as published (US 2006/0211808 A1).

In conclusion, there is no incentive for a person of ordinary skill in the art from the Wang reference to incorporate polymers from the prior art, which are explicitly taught by Wang as disadvantageous, into the compositions according to Wang. Wang neither specifically teaches nor suggests that one should choose a high diblock content of block copolymers in order to provide for an improved wet peel strength, which is exactly the opposite of what Wang aims at.

We believe that the claims now presented distinguish the invention from the prior art, and that this application is in proper form for allowance.

Respectfully submitted,

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